

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Koehler-Bright Star, Inc.

Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center

Koehler-Bright Star, Inc. Eliminates Product Defects with Assistance From NEPIRC

Client Profile:

Koehler-Bright Star, Inc., is a manufacturer of carbon-zinc batteries and professional grade flashlights for the industrial and municipal markets. The facility in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania employs 70 people.

Situation:

New products being developed by Koehler-Bright Star required higher levels of skills on the cold solder joints and pull tests. Quality testing resulted in failed or weak joints. The Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, was called upon to provide assistance in eliminating such problems.

Solution:

NEPIRC, in conjunction with Koehler-Bright Star, secured a qualified consultant to deliver an Industrial Soldering training program for 12 employees at the company's facility. Topics of training included soldering basics and solder joint theory, flux actions, workmanship standards review, through-hole component types, hand tool requirements, soldering iron requirements, work area set-up and cleanliness, and component placement. The program provided the required training for employees and, therefore, provided the knowledge needed on how soldering works, the operators' use of preheating and timed feeding of solder in order to produce repeatable strong solder joints, and the ability to visually inspect and identify nonconformance at the time of assembly. Operators have been able to make production successful. Quality control and production control turn-backs have been eliminated.

Results:

* Eliminated defects, improved efficiency and increased productivity by 20 percent.

Testimonial:

"I can't say enough about how much I appreciate having Charlie Vaccaro as my 'go to person' at NEPIRC. Charlie has been instrumental in helping me achieve so many training objectives. The soldering class is one prime example of how helpful he was in finding us a quality training program that was done on-site. THANK YOU for your efforts in this and every other project we have worked on together!"

NEPIRC is an organization that I would truly be lost without because it is so convenient to have an organization that is close to our facility that offers so many programs that are relevant to our manufacturing needs. I have sent several employees to the supervisory training class, the OSHA training, etc. Since the company is committed to training 100% of our employees in Lean 101, it helps having NEPIRC close by to send a group of new hires as needed.

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Patricia Leonard, VP, Industrial Relations